AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) Polymeric particles capable of absorbing blood and/or body fluids comprising

a) at least one interpolymerized ethylenically unsaturated acid-functional monomer,

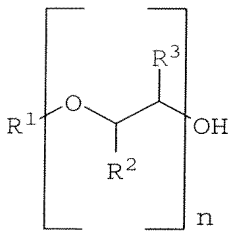
b) at least one interpolymerized crosslinker,

c) optionally one or more interpolymerized ethylenically and/or allylically unsaturated monomers copolymerizable with a),

d) optionally one or more water-soluble polymers onto which said monomers a), b), and optionally c) are at least partially grafted, and

e) optionally one or more reacted postcrosslinkers,

wherein said polymeric particles are coated with at least one surfactant and with at least one solvent of the general formula (I)



(I)

,

wherein

R^1 is C_1-C_6-alkyl with or without halogen substitution,

R^2 and R^3 are independently hydrogen or methyl, and

n is an integer from 1 to 5,

wherein the polymer particles are further coated with aluminum cations.

2. (Previously presented) The polymeric particles of claim 1 wherein the surfactant is a nonionic surfactant having an HLB value in the range from 2 to 18.

3. (Previously presented) The polymeric particles of claim 1 wherein the solvent is a compound of the general formula (I) wherein

R^1 is C_2-C_6-alkyl,

R^2 and R^3 are each hydrogen, and

n is an integer from 1 to 3.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) The polymeric particles of claim 1 characterized by a blood absorbence of at least 15 g/g in the dry state.

7. (Previously presented) The polymeric particles of claim 1 that are free of postcrosslinking.

8. (Previously presented) A mixture of polymeric particles of claim 1 wherein not less than 20% by weight of said polymeric particles are free of postcrosslinking.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) The polymeric particles of claim ~~4~~ 1 wherein the polymeric particles are coated with a solution of the ~~at least one multivalent metal cation~~ aluminum cations.